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Montana Businesses Reminded to Submit 2007 Census Data Industry Data Crucial to Upcoming Economic Census

(HELENA) – With the start of the New Year, the Montana Department of Commerce is reminding Montana businesses to submit their 2007 Economic Census Forms to the U.S. Census Bureau by **February 12, 2008**. This industry data will play a crucial role in developing an accurate picture of the U.S. economy.

More than 4 million American businesses nationwide have received 2007 Economic Census forms, including approximately 20,000 businesses in Montana. The Economic Census is taken every five years in years ending in 2 and 7, and is the nation's most comprehensive measure of business and industry. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has called the economic census "indispensable to understanding the American economy."

"Montana's on the move and our strong economy is proof the state on the right track," said Governor Brian Schweitzer. "The information from the 2007 Economic Census will be a beneficial tool that can be used to tailor our economic future, and I encourage every Montana business to participate."

"Economic census forms that businesses receive in December will tell us how we are changing as a nation," said Thomas Mesenbourg Jr., the U.S. Census Bureau's Associate Director for Economic Programs. "Important economic indicators, such as gross domestic

product, are directly related to the quality of the data we get from businesses in every industry and every locality.”

“This information can be constructive in many facets of business, and is used by organizations large and small,” said Anthony Preite, Director of the Montana Department of Commerce. “National firms use the information to decide where to locate a factory, store or office. Local businesses will use the data to develop their marketing and sales strategies and evaluate expansion opportunities. Facts and figures from the Economic Census will provide the foundation for start-up businesses developing business plans and seeking loans.”

The Census Bureau has launched a new Web site — business.census.gov — to help businesses understand the economic census and how it benefits them. The site includes economic snapshots of selected industries and significant facts about every industry.

Economic census data provide the hard figures that businesses need when they consider expanding into new regions or markets. Businesses can look at benchmark values from the economic census to assess where they stand in the marketplace and to research market shares, salaries, product and sales trends, and site locations.

Firms in more than 1,000 industries will receive forms and will be asked to report information such as employment, payroll and the value of goods and services sold. Forms must be returned to the U.S. Census Bureau by **Feb. 12, 2008**. Businesses that receive forms are required by federal law to respond. Information about individual firms is kept confidential, and only aggregate industry data are published.

To see how many businesses in your area will receive forms, visit the Census Bureau’s 2007 Economic Census website Montana page at <http://www.census.gov/econ/census07/forms/MTFORMS.HTM>.

The first census results will be available in early 2009 when the “Advance” report provides totals for all economic sectors right at the start. All census results will be issued on the Internet over a 2-year period.

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